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ABSTRACT

The aim of this booklet is to provide answers to the most frequently asked questions about the Child Development Associate (CDA) credentialing program. These questions are (1) What is the CDA program? (2) Who are CDAs? (3) Why is the CDA program important? and, (5) What is the future of the CDA program? In addition to answers to such questions, the booklet contains a table listing the number of CDAs by state as of January 1, 1984, a summary of major findings of studies of caregiver qualifications, a list of organizations affiliated with the CDA credentialing commission, a list of states that have incorporated the CDA credential into their licensing regulations, and a chart of the current CDA credential award system and its planned expansion. (RH)

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Improving Child Care Through The Child Development Associate (CDA) Program

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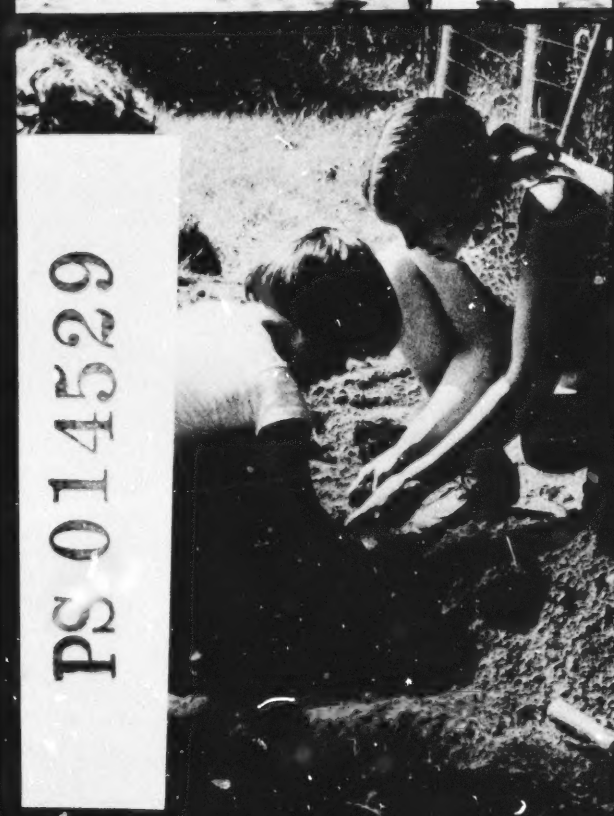

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"One does not learn everything by reading words on a page in a book. Learning comes through living. The CDA gives one the chance to live and learn about young children."

CDA, Kentucky

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INTRODUCTION

Interest in child care and early education has risen steadily during the last 20 years. The increased number of women in the labor force and the growing awareness regarding the importance of children's early experiences have increased the demand for quality child care services.

According to a Census Bureau report (1982), there are approximately 8.5 million preschool children with working mothers. Many of these children are enrolled in some form of group care, including day care, Head Start or nursery school. Others are in family day care or are being taken care of by relatives or babysitters. The number of young children who are cared for by people other than their parents for part of the day is steadily increasing. From 1965 to 1980, enrollment of three and four year olds in pre-primary programs more than tripled and all indications are that this trend will continue.

During the last ten years both short-range and long-range studies have indicated that quality child care programs do have positive results on the development of young children. To have a quality program for children, however, requires competent staff. Even good facilities, materials and curriculum, and the best intentions of program sponsors cannot guarantee quality child care unless those who deal directly with the children are competent, knowledgeable and dedicated.

The Child Development Associate (CDA) program represents a unique effort on the part of the federal government and the child care profession to fulfill this need for qualified child care staff. In 1971, the Office of Child Development, now the Administration for Children, Youth and Families, brought together a group of professionals in the field of child development and early childhood education. The concept which emerged, to develop an innovative, comprehensive plan for training, assessing and credentialing child care staff, was a vision for the future. Since that time the child care profession, working primarily with federal funding, has made the Child Development Associate Program a reality.

This booklet answers the most frequently asked questions about CDA. For more information, contact the CDA National Credentialing Program, (800) 424-4310.

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What Is The Child Development Associate?

Program Overview

The Child Development Associate (CDA) Program is a major national effort to improve the quality of child care. Focusing on the skills of child care providers, it is designed to provide performance-based training, assessment and credentialing of child care staff and home visitors in their work with young children and their families. The CDA Competency Standards, which serve as the foundation for staff training and evaluation, are the basis for this activity. Nearly thirteen thousand child care providers have received the CDA Credential, affecting approximately one half million young children and involving one quarter million parents in the assessment of their children's teachers.

Since its inception in 1971, the CDA Program has represented a singular collaboration between the early childhood profession and the federal government. The CDA Credentialing Commission, composed of representatives from major early childhood organizations, sets the policies and standards for the CDA National Credentialing Program and awards the CDA Credential. The CDA Competency Standards, which define the skills needed by caregivers to service children and families, were carefully developed and validated by the early childhood profession. The proof that a caregiver has acquired and demonstrated these competencies is through the award of a CDA Credential.

Bank Street College of Education currently administers the CDA National Credentialing Program. In this role, Bank Street is responsible for conducting CDA assessments and for the implementation of policies regarding the CDA Competency Standards and assessment system. While CDA assessment is nationally-based, CDA training is provided by more than 350 colleges and universities throughout the country.

The Administration for Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) has supported the CDA Program for more than a decade. Currently the CDA National Credentialing Program has an operating budget of approximately two million dollars. A grant from ACYF covers approximately one half of these costs, with the remaining funded through user fees and private contributions. In addition, more than one and one half million dollars of in-kind (volunteer) services are provided by the early childhood profession each year.

CDA — A Model of Innovation

The unique characteristics of the CDA Program serve as a model of innovation in the field of early childhood education. The design of the program is based on the assumption that competence can be demonstrated and that both training and assessment require a team approach, must be individualized and field-based. Just as the underlying assumptions and philosophy of the Head Start Program have influenced the delivery of child care services in general, the basic concepts of the CDA Program have served as a catalyst for colleges and universities in the development and improvement of their early childhood education programs.

Field-Based Training and Assessment. CDA training and assessment is not based on the completion of a set of prescribed courses or traditional paper and pencil tests. Instead, it relies on the acquisition and demonstration of competence while the individual works directly with young children. Central to CDA training is the careful integration of theoretical preparation in child development and early childhood education and practical everyday on-the-job experiences. Approximately 50 percent or more of the total training time is spent in supervised field experiences. CDA assessment is also field-based; Candidates are assessed as they interact with children in a child care setting and children and parents in their homes.

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Individualization. While training and assessment follow basic criteria, each process is geared to the individual participant. Competence is not equated with the number of years spent in school and progression through training and assessment varies according to individual needs, abilities and experiences. Basic to the CDA Program philosophy is the belief that training should be geared to the trainee's strengths and areas that need improvement.

While some can complete training within a short period of time, other trainees advance more slowly and may need several years. The final decision to begin the assessment process is also individualized.

Team Approach. A team effort is the basis of both training and assessment. CDA training is based on the assumption that the trainee and the trainer are a team. Together they appraise the skills and knowledge of the trainee with regard to the CDA Competencies and together they decide on a plan for training. Similarly, the CDA assessment system relies on a team decision in which a "Parent/ Community Representative", a local "Advisor", a "Representative" of the CDA National Credentialing Program and the individual Candidate all participate. This local assessment team concept is unique in the area of credentialing professionals because it includes consumer (parent) opinions and self-evaluation, and because it provides for local input while respecting national standards.

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CDAs — Child Care Professionals

The choice of work with young children and their families is one of the most important career decisions that one can make in our society. It is a choice of profound importance to the critical early years. A society that provides for young children will reap the benefits of their successful development.

THE SIX COMPETENCY GOALS DEMONSTRATED BY CDAs INCLUDE:

- ☐ establishing and maintaining a safe, healthy learning environment
- ☐ advancing physical and intellectual competence
- ☐ supporting social and emotional development and providing positive guidance and discipline
- ☐ establishing positive and productive relationships with families
- ☐ ensuring a well-run, purposeful program responsive to participant needs
- ☐ maintaining a commitment to professionalism

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WHO ARE CDAs?

There are nearly 13,000 CDAs across the country. By definition, a Child Development Associate (CDA) is a person able to meet the specific needs of children and who, with parents and other adults, works to nurture children's physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth in a child development framework.

CDAs work in a variety of settings including Head Start, day care and other preschool programs. Although not usually responsible for overseeing the total program, they are responsible for a group or classroom of children within a center or a group of families and their children in a home visitor program.

The National Survey of CDAs (CDANCP, 1983) provides a profile of people who have earned the CDA credential. In general CDAs are a group of women with considerable experience as child care providers. The survey data indicate that CDAs have, on the average, more than seven years of experience working with young children and approximately 76% have at least some college (30% have two year degrees or better). CDAs are overwhelmingly female (99%) with an average age of 38 years at the time of credential award.

CDAs come from every state. The following chart provides a state-by-state profile.

NUMBER OF CDAs BY STATE
January 1, 1984

STATE	TOTAL
Alabama	300
Alaska	37
Arizona	446
Arkansas	367
California	693
Colorado	303
Connecticut	97
Delaware	28
District of Columbia	27
Florida	226
Georgia	274
Hawaii	140
Idaho	84
Illinois	569
Indiana	167
Iowa	207
Kansas	147
Kentucky	161
Louisiana	445
Maine	63
Maryland	138
Massachusetts	148
Michigan	493
Minnesota	339
Mississippi	612
Missouri	481
Montana	139
Nebraska	111
Nevada	83
New Hampshire	23
New Jersey	121
New Mexico	254
New York	332
North Carolina	344
North Dakota	48
Ohio	526
Oklahoma	302
Oregon	106
Pennsylvania	429
Puerto Rico	126
Rhode Island	39
South Carolina	295
South Dakota	58
Tennessee	203
Texas	1,058
Utah	109
Vermont	30
Virgin Islands	18
Virginia	204
Washington	424
West Virginia	96
Wisconsin	258
Wyoming	76
TOTAL	12,838

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cda profiles

To understand CDA, one needs to take a closer look at the individual people involved. The following four CDA profiles reflect the stories of thousands of CDAs across the country who work with young children and their families. These personal anecdotes present a picture of the ways that the CDA Program is touching the lives of child care staff.

Making Every Moment Count

When Regina McLaughlin was 19 years old, she had an eighth grade education, three children and an overwhelming drive to finish school. "It was my biggest desire," said McLaughlin. "I always knew I'd go back." She was very successful at setting goals for herself and following through on them.

CDA "opened the door for me . . . I treasure that credential."

Upon receiving a high school equivalency, she enrolled at a junior college, spent six years earning a bachelor's degree and then was awarded a master's degree in early childhood education. In 1977, McLaughlin earned a CDA Credential and claimed that of all her educational experiences it was CDA that "opened the door for me. Its impact was the most significant because it was so different. I treasure that credential." Although her progress took many years, in which she also worked and raised her children as a single mother, it was worth the effort to McLaughlin. Today, she has a fast-paced job as an education coordinator with Grolier Educational Services in southern California.

McLaughlin's interest in working with children began in 1966, when she became excited reading about President Johnson's War on Poverty and the creation of Head Start. Beginning as a neighborhood aide, she progressed to assistant teacher and head teacher positions.

Because she has a son who is handicapped, McLaughlin was drawn to working with handicapped children and became a developmental training teacher in the Head Start Program. This new environment was not without its challenges. She was hesitant to do finger plays because one little girl was missing fingers. When she remembered CDA's emphasis on building on the strengths of the group, "it gave me courage" to go ahead with the finger plays. The child participated and "was happy to be part of the group."

With increased self-confidence, she improved her ability by learning important organizational skills and impressed others with her performance. Her CDA made the difference in overcoming skepticism when LaVerne College hired her to teach its CDA course. Eventually she was able to teach several other early childhood courses. Even now, in her job with Grolier, McLaughlin finds that "a lot of the things I have to do — putting timetables together, communicating with all types of people, getting to places on time — I had to do to earn the credential."

She described her present job as "very hectic", usually involving six or even seven days a week and many evenings. "I would never have taken it," she explained, "had not my own children been up and grown. It came at a perfect time in my life." She travels to children's programs in several counties in southern California, teaching the children with Grolier materials and then showing the company's books to parents. "I'm an idealist," she said. "I have a great love for books and I'd like to be a Johnny Appleseed, planting seeds of learning by putting books into thousands of homes. Books should be a part of every child's home environment."

"I look for the best to happen out of things. You have to believe that you really have something to offer."

McLaughlin fondly recalled the home environment, personified by her mother and step-father. She was born in New Orleans, living there and in New York before the family moved to Seattle, Washington. Her mother, who was raised near the cotton fields of Mississippi, and her step-father were poor, but were great sources of strength, exposing the children to books and classical music. Although both their daughters married at very young ages, neither forgot about the importance of education. Many years later, on a special weekend in 1979 and with their mother watching, McLaughlin was awarded a master's degree from California State University at Dominguez just one day after her sister received a bachelor's degree.

McLaughlin feels strongly that child care workers need to take advantage of

McLaughlin is sharing her love of books with children and their parents.

Soua Ly helps Laotian families adjust to a new culture.

opportunities to grow in their profession, urging them to "subscribe to professional magazines, take a course, attend conferences, know who's who in the field of legislation and be a member of at least one major early childhood organization. New information is constantly coming out to keep us from becoming stagnant." Her enthusiasm and energy have made a great difference in her life and McLaughlin is anticipating future experiences with similar excitement and curiosity. "I look for the best to happen out of things. You have to believe that you really have something to offer."

With Loving Care From Laos

Silvis, Illinois is a very long way from northern Laos, but a determined former refugee is carving out a productive new life there. Soua Ly was 21 years old when he and his family fled Laos in 1976, just as the long IndoChina War leading to communist control of that nation was nearing its end. Today, he works for Project NOW Head Start in East Moline and is a CDA. Getting there wasn't easy.

He lived in a large village called Long Cheng, in northern Laos. The oldest of nine children, he worked as a cashier to help support his family. His father was a soldier and farmer. When the communists threatened the village, the family crossed the border into Thailand. There he met his future wife, May Yang. Together, they arrived in America in August, 1976. After nearly four years in Montgomery, Alabama, they moved to Illinois.

"For the first five months, I felt homesick very much," remembered Ly. Speaking little English and faced with a totally new culture, he was frustrated because "it was very hard to communicate." Eventually, friends were able to help and Ly says, "now I feel fine."

Ly, in turn, soon proved valuable to fellow Laotian immigrants. The Head Start Program in which the oldest of his three sons was enrolled serves two dozen Laotian families. He first volunteered as a translator during workshop presentations and home visits. Eventually his ability to work with the Laotian families lead to his being hired by the program.

Kay Miclot, Project NOW Education Coordinator, called Ly a "really good model" for the children and says the parents treat him "with great respect." Ly is highly motivated to help his people. Miclot recalled that upon learning about CDA, he "decided to do it and did it." Ly became excited when using the CDA Competencies, because he had a better understanding of how he could do his job. He was credentialed in February, 1982. Using his Portfolio as an example, Miclot pointed out that Ly now writes "beautifully" in English.

Ly said that CDA made a significant difference in his ability to work with the children and their parents. He has been able to increase the self-concept of the children who, he says, "were afraid to talk to the others. Now they find more new friends every day." Ly is helping the Laotian parents to learn more, too. Miclot noted that many of the Laotian children had lost their front teeth. They stay "on the bottle" until age four and "were losing their teeth to sugar," she said. Ly was able to explain this to the parents and they hope to see a difference in the smiling faces of the children.

Ly still thinks of his homeland, the plight of its people and of his parents . .

Ly still thinks of his homeland, the plight of its people and of his parents, now living in France. "The mountain people . . .," he said, "many of them were soldiers before who are afraid of the communists. They still live like they used to," he reported, "if they live far from the city. In the city, it is hard for them."

His greatest wish is to be able to bring his parents from France where they have lived for the last three years. In the Laotian culture, married sons stay near or in the home, taking care of parents for the remainder of their lives. Ly knows that, but says, "it is hard for me to catch up and to find a place so that we can live together again." He has come a long way, though, and should have a bright future as a CDA in Illinois.

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cda profiles

Foster Parent to Forty Infants

Many careers in child care begin with one word . . . love. In the case of Joyce Leece, a CDA from Holly, Michigan and a preschool lead teacher, love has been the guiding force in her many years of work with children. Her commitment to a healthy beginning for children was amply demonstrated before she ever set foot in a center. She and her husband, Ken, in addition to raising their three youngsters, were foster parents for 40 infants.

The Leeces learned of the great need for foster parents at a church meeting. They were referred to Catholic Social Services, where they applied to take infants and after a painstaking investigation, the first baby was placed in the Leece home. The family was elated.

It was always hard to say goodby. "The first child was the hardest . . . I wondered if we should take another."

The infants, given up by their natural mothers for adoption, were usually three days old when they arrived at the Leeces and stayed with the family for about eight weeks. It was always hard to say goodbye.

"The first child was the hardest," recalled Joyce Leece. "I wondered if we should take another. But we soon learned that some parents (who want to adopt) went five years without getting a child. We had to remind ourselves that we had three healthy children. But you feel like you are losing one of the family. You never really get used to it."

The infants kept coming, forty in the next ten years. Eventually the Leeces were allowed to meet some of the adoptive parents. "It was beautiful," said Leece, "the child was getting parents and this made the separation easier. Some adoptive parents kept in touch and sent pictures."

The experience was very good for Leece's children. She and her husband had discussed their wish to be foster parents with them so they would understand and accept it. "It was a real family project," said Leece. The older children learned to change diapers and feed the infants. Since the infants were of several races, the children "grew up pretty free of prejudice."

When her children had grown, Leece decided to take a job as an aide with the Holly Community Education Center. Although she had never worked outside the home, she was encouraged by her husband, Ken, who works at the General Motors plant in nearby Orion. Her children were proud, too.

As Leece gained experience at the center, the head teacher, a former babysitter for the Leece children, recommended the CDA Credential. "I had never heard of it," laughed Leece, who responded by saying, "At my age?" As she put together her portfolio and successfully completed the assessment process, she discovered areas of weakness. Because she had never administered a physical education program, she found she had a lot to learn about the mechanics of muscle development. Dealing with parents was harder than she expected, too.

Getting her CDA stimulated Leece's long-suppressed wish to go to college . . .

Getting her CDA stimulated Leece's long-suppressed wish to go to college for an early childhood degree. She hopes to earn an associate degree in the next year.

Now a head teacher, Leece calls CDA a godsend. "I wouldn't be a head teacher if it weren't for CDA. I never would have dreamed it could happen. It's been a new career and a second start." it's been a good start for the children at Holly Center, too.

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The children invited Leece to lunch in the housekeeping corner.

Grinolds, who gained both a CDA and self-confidence, now runs her own center.

Friend's Faith Helped Change Her Life

Jackie Grinolds runs a center. She balances the books, designs the curriculum, plans the floor space and hires the staff. She would be the first to admit that it wouldn't have seemed possible just a few years ago.

Grinolds had raised her six children in Grants Pass, Oregon and didn't know what to do next. She tried baking, canning, sewing. "I sewed clothes for my husband until I couldn't sew anymore. It was a disaster."

At nearby Rogue Community College, a volunteer was needed at the day care center and she decided to try it. Val Hodatt, the center director, recalled the incredible energy her new volunteer displayed, cleaning the kitchen, washing toys, sweeping floors, and cleaning the oven. "She came every day and was really dedicated." Eventually, Hodatt decided to provide training for Grinolds to work with the children. Grinolds loved being with them, but was not sure she had the potential.

There are few early childhood training resources in Grants Pass, so her discovery of CDA provided a great opportunity. With Hodatt helping, she worked hard, eventually earning her credential.

The impact of CDA on Grinolds was dramatic. She called it, "a chance of a lifetime." Before, "I didn't think I was special," she said. The most noticeable changes were a new confidence and self-esteem. With a better attitude about herself, she opened up to others, becoming more compassionate, patient and understanding. Not only did she better understand the children's needs and feel equal to center staff for the first time, but she got an unexpected bonus.

The impact of CDA on Grinolds was dramatic. She called it "a chance of a lifetime."

Her home life got better. "I could talk more on an adult level," she said, which was "much more interesting for my husband, Wayne. He was extremely proud about my CDA, called all the relatives and took me out to a special dinner party." One night, he took her to a meeting of the Board of Education where she was surprised with a plaque recognizing her for her dedication as a volunteer and for being awarded the CDA Credential. "Everybody knew about it but me," she laughed.

Early this year, Hodatt invited Grinolds to a meeting with Smith Management (SMI), which planned to open a center for children of its employees. Grinolds offered to run the center, was hired and opened it last spring.

The SMI Day Care and Infant-Toddler Center is part of a complex that includes a hospital and insurance company operated by Smith Management. Grinolds, who had to plan every aspect of the facility, confessed that, "I wasn't scared or nervous, although I knew I should be."

Hodatt recalled the excitement as the opening drew near. "Jackie did all the leg work and did a good job. It was really something special to see a brand new center." The longer hours and increased responsibility of running the center, which has 30 preschoolers and infants, has necessitated adjustments for Grinolds and her husband. Grinolds said, "Wayne was used to coming home and having me there. Now he gets home first, but he's real complimentary and has grown a lot with it."

Grinolds' friendship with Hodatt remains special, based on mutual respect and the knowledge that one stood by the other to help her grow into a more independent woman. "I can talk to her about anything," said Grinolds. "She is always there when I need her and has helped me grow tremendously without asking for a lot of recognition." Hodatt, in turn, told Grinolds, "You did it. Those qualities were always there, they were just buried."

Now that she runs her own program, Grinolds is doing what she can to help others grow. "I'm training one of my teachers to get the credential," she reported. Grinolds is a leader now and the reason she is able to be one "all boils down to my CDA."

WHY IS CDA IMPORTANT?

Improving the Quality of Child Care

More than one half million children in the United States have been cared for by CDAs. The type of care provided is an essential ingredient in the overall quality of any child care program. A primary goal of CDA is to increase the caregivers' ability to meet the specific needs of children and to work with parents and other staff to nurture children's development.

Although research on CDA has been limited, the results of four studies provides evidence that the CDA Competencies are related to indicators of quality care and that the CDA Program has a positive effect on the caregivers' ability to work with young children and their families. Among these studies, "The National Day Care Study" (Ruopp, 1979) was one of the most extensive research efforts ever to focus on day care. The study was designed to investigate the costs and effects associated with variations of regulatable characteristics of center day care, including caregiver qualifications. This characteristic has long been considered one of the key determi-

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nants of quality child care.

"The National Survey of CDAs" (CDANCP, 1983) was the first significant research effort to profile the CDA community. A 47% response rate was received on a 31 item survey questionnaire sent to more than 1,000 randomly selected CDAs nationwide. Similarly, the "National Survey of Head Start Directors" (1983), conducted by the National Head Start Association, surveyed the Head Start directors nationwide to evaluate the impact of CDA on the Head Start Program.

In addition to these sources, information on the effect of CDA training was provided through an evaluation study conducted by the College of Human Development of the Pennsylvania State University entitled "The Effects of CDA Training on Head Start Personnel Beliefs, Attitudes and Behaviors." (Peters and Sutton, 1984). This skills training program was geared to the CDA Program and provided training to Head Start personnel. Eighty-one CDA trainees enrolled in seven programs in 1981-82 participated in the research and evaluation. A comparison group for the study was composed of 31 senior undergraduate students enrolled in teacher preparation programs.

Below is a summary of the major findings of these studies which relate to caregiver qualifications.

- ☐ **Caregivers with education/training relevant to young children deliver better care with somewhat superior developmental effects for children.**
- ☐ **Caregivers with high CDA ratings had classrooms in which children were more actively involved in classroom activities.**

"National Day Care Study"

- ☐ **Ninety-three percent of the CDAs reported a positive program effect on their work with young children.**
- ☐ **Eighty-four percent of the CDAs reported a positive effect on their work with parents.**
- ☐ **Eighty-three percent of the CDAs reported a positive program effect on their relationships with other staff members.**

"National Survey of CDAs"

- ☐ **Eighty-seven percent of the Head Start Directors reported that CDA had improved the quality of their education component.**
- ☐ **Eighty-eight percent of the Head Start Directors reported that the CDA experience had improved the quality of care provided by the staff.**

"National Survey of Head Start Directors"

- ☐ **Trainees saw positive changes in their own job performance, particularly in direct classroom interactions with children.**
- ☐ **There were essentially no differences between CDA trainees and four-year undergraduate student teachers in beliefs about learning and teaching, and self concept.**

"The Effects of CDA Training on Head Start Personnel Beliefs, Attitudes and Behaviors"

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The following data from three studies indicate the importance of CDA in the enhancement of personal and professional development of the caregiver.

- ☐ **Ninety-seven percent of the CDAs reported a positive effect on self concept.**
- ☐ **Ninety-three percent of the CDAs reported that CDA influenced them to continue their education.**
- ☐ **Ninety-three percent of the CDAs reported feeling more a part of the professional community.**

"National Survey of CDAs"

- ☐ **Eighty-nine percent of the Head Start Directors reported that the CDA experience was beneficial to the personal and professional development of individual staff members.**

"National Survey of Head Start Directors"

- ☐ **The CDA Program seemed to raise the educational aspirations of the trainees and encouraged a substantial number to seek further education.**
- ☐ **Seventy-five percent of the trainees reported positive changes in themselves—particularly in the area of self-confidence.**

"The Effects of CDA Training on Head Start Personnel Beliefs, Attitudes and Behaviors."

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Enhancing Personal and Professional Development of Child Care Staff

A CDA from Iowa once wrote, "CDA should be called a confidence builder." For many child care staff, becoming a CDA is an affirmation of the value of their work with young children, a symbol of success in a professional career. For many who have not previously experienced higher education, CDA provides the incentive and motivation to pursue educational goals.

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WHO SUPPORTS CDA?

The success of the CDA Program is due to the strong support it receives from the early childhood community, private organizations, public agencies and parents of children in child care. Support from these groups is demonstrated on the national, state and local level.

Support for CDA from the child care profession has been evident since the original task force of early childhood specialists, through the efforts of the federal government, came together to design the program. Today this support continues on the national level through the work of the CDA Credentialing Commission which develops policy for the CDA Program. Approximately twenty national professional organizations support the CDA Program through their membership on the CDA Credentialing Commission.

On the state level, more than one half of the state licensing agencies have recognized CDA through child care regulations. CDA support groups in 14 states are hard at work to increase the recognition of the CDA Credential. These voluntary groups consist of a cross section of the child care community, including CDAs and other advocates representing early childhood organizations and training institutions.

The CDA Program relies on the support of thousands of early childhood professionals who participate on local assessment teams. It is estimated that over ten million dollars of in-kind volunteer services from early childhood professionals have been donated to the program over the past decade.

Parents also provide a very crucial support to the program. Every parent with a child in a program served by a CDA Candidate has been involved in the assessment process. It is estimated that more than a quarter of a million parents have contributed to the evaluation of their children's teachers. In addition, nearly 13,000 parents have served as Parent/Community Representatives on local assessment teams. In this way parents join with professionals to support a program which ensures the quality of care provided to their young children.

CDA Credentialing Commission

American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc.

American Psychological Association

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association

Association for Childhood Education International

Bank Street College of Education

Children's Foundation

Children's Theatre Association, Division of American Theatre

National Association for Child Care Management

National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education

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National Association of State Directors of Child Development

National Black Child Development Institute

National Center for Clinical Infant Programs

National Child Care Centers, Inc.

National Head Start Association

Puerto Rican Association for Community Affairs

Southern Association on Children Under Six

Texas Early Childhood Careers Recognition Council

United Neighborhood Centers of America, Inc.

CDA in State Standards

As of January, 1984, the following twenty-seven states (plus Washington, D.C.) have incorporated the CDA Credential into their state licensing regulations as an option for preschool qualifications. This means you can use CDA to help meet state certification requirements for day care.

Arizona
Arkansas
District of Columbia
Hawaii
Illinois
Iowa
Kansas
Maryland
Michigan
Minnesota
Nebraska
Nevada
New Jersey
New Mexico
New York State (excluding NYC)
North Carolina
North Dakota
Oklahoma
Oregon
Pennsylvania
South Carolina
South Dakota
Texas
Utah
Virginia
Washington
Wisconsin
West Virginia

In addition to the above, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing voted to incorporate CDA into their Limited Regular Children's Center Instructional Permit Requirements.

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WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF CDA?

During the past decade, CDA has been available only to center-based caregivers working with three to five year old children. Center-based programs for preschool children, however, only serve a portion of the young children in child care. It is estimated that there are 32,000 children served in home-based Head Start Programs, approximately 120,000 children under the age of two in center-based care and five million children in family day care homes.

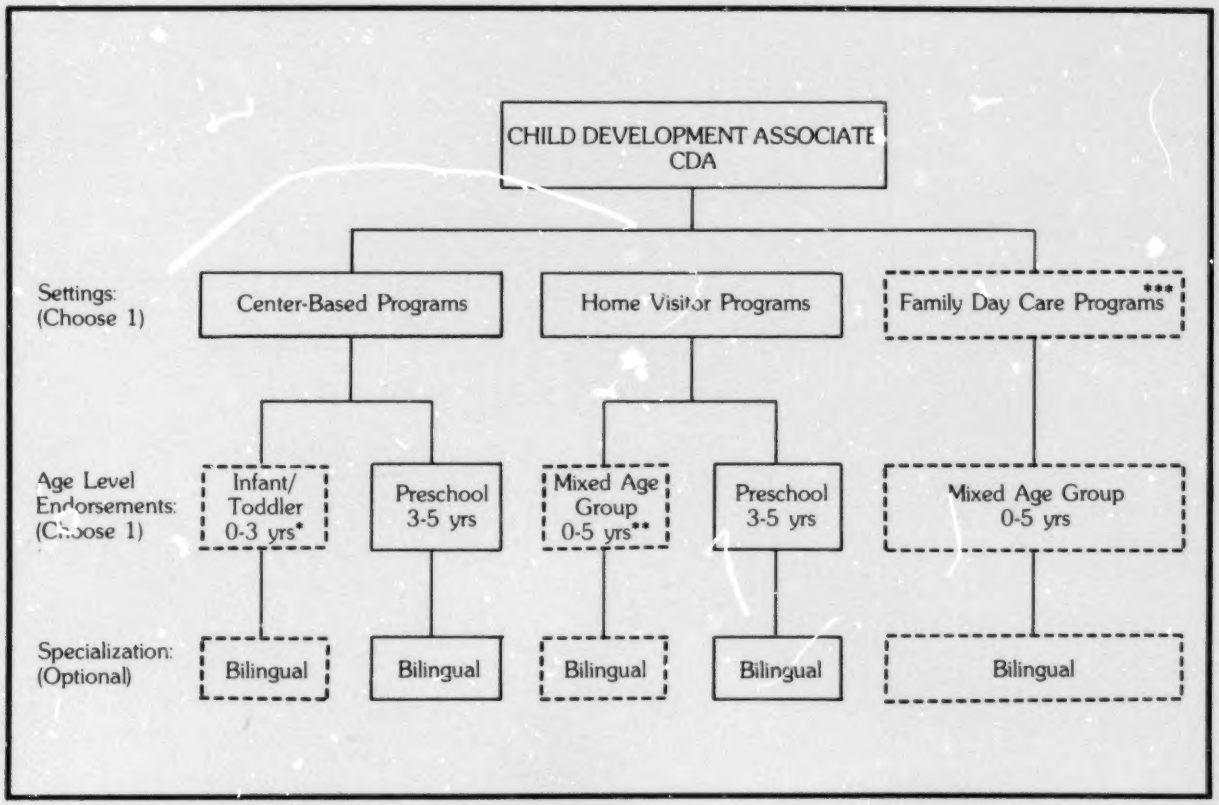
Recognizing these facts, the CDA National Credentialing Program launched a major effort to expand CDA to include home visitors, infant and toddler caregivers and family day care providers. Working with a panel of experts nationwide, a field review population of nearly 1,000 persons and representatives from professional early childhood organizations, the CDANCP drafted a set of competencies and an assessment system for these new provider groups.

In 1983, these expansion activities were continued with federal support and contributions from the private sector. This 17-month project includes field tests for the family day care and infant caregiver systems as well as capacity building to begin program implementation for all three groups. CDA assessments will be available to home visitors in Spring 1984, with assessments for family day care providers and infant caregivers to follow in 1984-85.

The ever increasing demand for child care calls for additional services provided through a variety of delivery systems. The essential ingredient to the quality of these services is the qualifications of the child care staff. Through the historic partnership among the professional, public and private sectors, CDA will continue to improve the quality of care by encouraging child care providers to live and learn about young children.

Current CDA Credential Award System and Future Expansion

The CDA Credential is awarded to individuals who work as child care providers or home visitors and have demonstrated that they are able to nurture children's physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth in cooperation with parents and other adults.



A Candidate for the CDA Credential must choose 1 setting and 1 age level endorsement area for their assessment. In addition, a Candidate has an option to be assessed for the Bilingual Specialization. This chart outlines the settings and endorsements that are currently available and those that are being developed for future implementation.

- - - Dotted lines indicate developmental work to be done.

_____ Solid lines indicate a setting or age level or specialization currently available.

* The CDA Credential in a center-based setting with an Infant/Toddler Endorsement will be ready for implementation in Fall 1984.

** Between March 1984, when the Home Visitor Credential Award System will be implemented, and Fall 1984, home visitors will only be assessed on the basis of their work with families of preschool children ages three to five years old. In Fall 1984, home visitors will be assessed on the basis of their work with children from birth to age five.

*** The CDA Credential in a family day care setting with a mixed age endorsement and the Bilingual Specialization will be ready for implementation in Spring 1985.

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Photographs on pages 11 and 13 submitted by CDAs

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